

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:08 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters During Tour of the Police Department Command and Control Center in New York City

February 6, 2002

Support for New York City

Q. Can you answer a quick—about the \$20 billion?

The President. Yes, absolutely.

Q. When are we going to get it, and why does there seem a reluctance—

The President. Oh, there's no reluctance. The \$20 billion needs to come to New York. And that's \$20 billion, by the way, not including the Victims' Compensation Fund. And I look forward to working with the New York delegation, the Governor, and the mayor to make sure that the Liberty Zone and the Liberty Bonds become reality. Now, that's one way for us to help New York rebuild herself, and a vital part of our economy and economic growth is to have a vibrant New York City.

And so the \$20 billion is coming. A lot of it has already come; there's more to come. And I look forward to working in a way to get it done.

Q. Have you had any chance to talk to Mitch Daniels and say, "Be a little nicer to New York"?

The President. No, Mitch understands my pledge. He understands what I said—when I said \$20 billion, I meant \$20 billion. And I'm the kind of fellow who does what I say I'm going to do. And I think it's important for the country to know that a vibrant New York City is vital for our economy. We've got to have a strong New York City.

It's not only a part of our economic scene at home, it's important for New York to be strong for international reasons, as well. And so I look forward to working with the mayor and the Governor to make sure we get this done.

Stimulus Package

Q. Any thoughts on the stimulus?

The President. Yes. Let me—one question on the stimulus. One answer on that is, at the minimum they need to take care of the workers, at the very minimum. But it's important for Congress to realize that our economy has not yet fully recovered. And therefore, I believe we still need to provide stimulus for economic growth so that there's jobs. People need work. And everything Congress ought to do is to take care of those who've lost their jobs but also recognize that people want more than an unemployment check; they want a steady paycheck. And so jobs ought to be what the people up there in Washington are asking themselves: How do we create jobs so people can find work?

Q. Why can't they get it done?

The President. You're asking the wrong man. I'm in the executive branch of Government.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:54 p.m. During the exchange, the President referred to Gov. George E. Pataki of New York and Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York City. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to Police Department Command and Control Center Personnel in New York City

February 6, 2002

Please be seated. Thank you all. It's nice to be back in New York City, and I am so proud to stand here today with New York's finest and New York's bravest. I have a message for you from your fellow Americans: Police and firefighters of New York, you have this Nation's respect, and you'll have this Nation's support.

The budget that Tom talked about increases the Federal commitment to our Nation's first-responders by more than 1,000 percent. It is the right thing to do, and you all are the right—to help us continue to fight this war on terror.

I want to thank Tom Ridge for taking on a job. He was a good Governor; he's a very

good Homeland Security Director. I know he comes from Pennsylvania—[*laughter*]—but I'm proud of the job he's doing. He's helping to develop a national strategy that starts with understanding that the best responders and the best response starts at the local level. And the role of the Federal Government is to facilitate the job done at the local level. And so, Governor, thank you so much for taking on this big assignment.

I want to thank your Governor. You know, it's very important to have a steady hand, an anchor in the wind, in a time of crisis. I think that's how you determine whether or not somebody knows how to lead. And your Governor showed your State and the country that he is a leader. And I'm proud to call him friend. I hope you're proud to call him Governor.

I appreciate your mayor. He's come in with a tough job, but he's going to tackle it with a lot of savvy. And New York made the right decision when they picked Mayor Bloomberg. He's got a lot of financial background; he's going to help New York City guide itself. [*Laughter*] It's important that you picked somebody who understands numbers over a politician, because he's going to be able to help guide you through this tough period. It's important. I think you made a good choice; I really do. And I'm proud to work with him.

I want to thank Vito for being here, as well. He's a fine Member of the United States Congress. Vito likes to bring his sister to every event—[*laughter*]—five sisters. Only one of them yelled. [*Laughter*]

And I want to thank—I want to thank Commissioner Kelly. It's good to see you again, Commissioner. I'm proud of your record, proud of your accomplishments.

Last week I reported to our Congress that the state of our Union has never been stronger, that despite a war, a recession, despite continuing danger, we are strong, really strong, because our people are strong. And there's no stronger people than the men and women who wear the uniform here in New York. There's no stronger people than those who kind of set the new standard of courage and honor.

There's a new ethic in America—at least I think one's coming on—a new culture, a

culture to replace “If it feels good, do it” with one of responsibility, with one defined by those brave words, “Let's roll.” But that's nothing new for the firefighters and the policemen of New York. That's been your ethic for a long, long time. That ethic's been around here way before September the 11th, and a lot of people are lucky the ethic was around.

As you rebuild your ranks, every new recruit walks in the path of heroes. And as a result of some of the courageous action here, not only is a new ethic evolving, but there's some fantastic examples for young recruits to follow.

Peter Ganci—many of you knew him. He was the highest ranking uniformed officer in the New York Fire Department. His deputy, Michael Regan, saw him for the last time on the morning of September the 11th, after the first building had collapsed and while the second building was still burning. Michael Regan recalled this: Peter directed every citizen and every firefighter to go north to safety, and he went south, directly into danger. Let's roll.

Brian McDonnell. Or, maybe—maybe you knew Brian well here. His wife called him a cop's cop. He was a former Army paratrooper. He was known for always putting his colleagues first. September the 11th, he was last seen charging into the South Tower to help his fellow citizens.

On the worst day this city has ever known, we saw some of the finest people New York has ever produced. We mourn every loss. We remember every life. But they will not have died in vain. I told our country and I told the world that we don't seek revenge; we seek justice. And I want to assure you all, those who have been touched by this terrible tragedy, justice will be meted out.

I unleashed the mighty United States military, and they have not let us down. In 5 short months, in a brief period of time, we have completely routed the Taliban. I've said loud and clear, “If you harbor a terrorist, if you feed a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist,” and the Taliban found out what we meant.

This is a patient nation. We are a determined nation. We're a nation that will not rest until we have brought justice not only

on the Al Qaida killers and governments which support and house them but on terrorism everywhere. Now we must seize the moment. History has called this Nation into action; history has given us a chance to defend freedom, to fight tyranny. And that's exactly what this country is going to do. We defend freedom.

Not only do we owe it to those whose lives were lost on September the 11th, but we owe it to the living, as well. We owe it to our children and our children's children, to protect a way of life, to defend freedom, to defend our values, to fight evil. And we will not tire nor will we rest until justice is done.

Oh, some around the world may grow weary. Some of them may grow exhausted by our drive for freedom. But not me, not our Government, and not our Nation.

I have submitted a budget that recognizes that Afghanistan is only the first theater on the war against terror. We significantly increase the budget for national defense. After all, it is our number one priority. It is the largest increase since the Presidency of Ronald Reagan, whose 91st birthday we celebrate today. His budgets helped rebuild the military power of the United States, and for that our Nation should be grateful.

But what was true in his day is true today, that whatever it costs to defend our security and whatever it costs to defend our freedom, we must pay it. I ask Congress to pass this budget. Our men and women who wear the uniform of the United States military deserve the best training, the best equipment, another pay raise, the best support of the United States of America.

And for those of you who have a relative who wear the uniform of the United States military—the moms and dads, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters—on behalf of a grateful nation, I want to thank you very much.

I'm fully aware of the task at hand. I know that in order to defend America in the long term, we've got to be successful overseas, that the best homeland defense is to rout out terror wherever it exists. I know that. And I know some of them are going to try to hide in caves, but there is no cave deep enough for us. They're going to try to run, but they can't run forever. They cannot run forever.

And in the meantime, until we achieve our objective, no matter how long that takes, we will secure our homeland.

I have a great honor of going into the Oval Office as your President. Every morning that I walk in there, I'm thrilled and honored. I take the dog in with me, and she seems to be thrilled and honored too. *[Laughter]* I sit down at the fantastic desk—it's a desk that the Roosevelts used; it's a desk John Kennedy used; Reagan used; it's a desk I'm honored to use. And the first thing I do is, I look at threats to the United States of America.

They're still out there. The enemy still wants to get us. And I want to assure you all we're doing everything in our power to prevent them from doing that, that my main job and the main job of Ridge and the FBI and Kelly and everybody else involved with law enforcement is to protect the American people, is to keep American families safe, that we're pouring all our energy into doing our job, which is the security of the country.

We've changed the attitude of the FBI. I mean, we're interested in spies; we're more interested in Al Qaida killers. We're going to run down white-collar criminals, but our focus is on finding any cell that may exist in our country and getting them. We're going to run down every piece of evidence we find and share it with State and local authorities. We're on the hunt. We're on the hunt, and we're not going to rest. We're just not going to rest. The American people need to know we're doing everything in our power to strengthen the security at home.

And we're preparing for—we're preparing responses. Yesterday Tom and I went over to Pittsburgh and talked about a bioterrorism response as a part of our homeland security package. We're loading up with medicines. We're going to have the health services communicate better with each other. We're ready—we're getting ready.

We're doing a better job of securing our border. We're going to figure out who's coming into our country and who's leaving our country, to make sure that people—*[applause]*. Listen, we're a great nation. We welcome people in. We just want to know why you're here. *[Laughter]* And if you're not supposed to be here more than a period of

time, then maybe you ought to just go on home. It's important that we have good information so we can secure the homeland. It's important that our airports be secure. And so, we worked with Congress to get a bill out to make air travel more safe. And it's important that we understand that in the first minutes and hours after attack, that's the most hopeful time to save lives. And so that's why we're focusing on the heroic efforts of those first-time responders. That's why we want to spend money to make sure equipment is there, strategies are there, communications are there, to make sure that you have whatever it takes, prepared to respond.

But the interesting thing about making sure our homeland is more secure is that, as a result of focusing on first-responders, neighborhoods will be more safe in the long run. As a result of focusing on bioterrorism, perhaps we'll develop vaccines and medicines and cures for other diseases. As a focus on making sure our health systems talk better, we'll leave behind a better health care system. As a way of making sure that our borders are more secure, we'll have a stronger Coast Guard. And so, the short run, we're focusing on attacks; the long run, the country will be better off for the doubling of the homeland security budget that I submitted to the United States Congress.

And part of making sure we're secure is to make sure there's economic security for New Yorkers and for the country. Obviously, I'm deeply concerned about the recession, and I understand the shocks to our economy, what 9/11 did. And I'm worried about the fact that many New Yorkers aren't working. And we want them to work. And that's why I am committed to defeating not only terrorists but the recession.

These are—I want you to know something: When I say I'm going to do something, I'm going to do it. I told the people of New York that we will work to provide at least \$20 billion to help New York rebuild herself, and that includes money apart from the Victims Compensation Fund. And when I say 20, I mean 20.

FEMA is on the spot. And we're now spending a lot of money here to help New York and the emergency side of things. And we need to restore the infrastructure. We

need to quickly rebuild the highways. And you know what else we need? We need the Liberty Zone in lower Manhattan. We need to provide job incentive—incentive to create jobs in the area that was affected by the attack. Congress needs to put the Liberty Zone, the Liberty Bonds in a stimulus package and get it to my desk so I can sign it for the good of New York City.

It is important that New York City be vibrant and strong. It's important when people not only here at home but around the world look at this fantastic city, they see economic vitality and growth. I'm confident we can recover together. It's going to take Federal and State effort. I'm here to tell you the Federal help is coming.

You know, I don't know what went through the enemy's mind when they attacked us. I think they thought we were soft. I like to needle them by saying they must have been watching too much daytime TV. *[Laughter]* They probably thought that, oh, we'll attack, and we'll just kind of roll over, gnash our teeth a little bit, wring our hands, mourn for the dead, and forget. Boy, they really miscalculated.

See, they don't understand America. They don't understand us. We're understanding more about ourselves as a result of what went on. We understand heroism. We understand now what it means to recite a prayer, tell your wife, "I love you," on the phone, and drive a plane in the ground to save others' lives. We're beginning to understand more about sacrifice, personal responsibility.

See, I believe out of this terrible evil can come some great good. I believe there's a better understanding of the sacrifice the policemen and firefighters make, and that's good for America. I believe there is a different culture evolving, one that says each of us need to be responsible for the decisions we make; each of us ought to love a neighbor like we'd like to be loved ourself. There's a different culture evolving as moms and dads now understand their most important job is to love their children with all their heart and all their soul.

People ask me all the time, "What can I do to help fight terror, fight the evil ones?" Well, I believe since this is a struggle between evil and good, the best way to do it

is to do some good in your neighborhood, is to mentor a child who may be lost, is to help a shut-in, is to walk across the street to a neighbor in need and say, "What can I do to help you?"

Many of you are already doing that, by loving the widows and the children of those who lost their life. It's these thousands and millions of acts of kindness all across America on a daily basis that define the character of our Nation. The way you fight evil is with millions of acts of good. It's the cumulative effect of the heart and soul of America that stands tall against the evil ones. Not only will we prevail militarily in the long run, but we will have overcome evil by being a nation that is more compassionate, more decent, more loving to our fellow citizens.

I'm so proud of how America has responded. I'm proud of New York City and the strength and character you have shown. I loved it when our pilots found on some of the munitions this simple sign, "I Love New York." America loves New York. We love your strength. We love your resolve. We've loved your courage in the face of incredible difficulty.

Keep on, and my God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:48 p.m. in the Imperial Ballroom at the Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly of New York City; and Maggie McDonnell, widow of Officer Brian McDonnell.

Remarks at a Fundraiser for New York Governor George E. Pataki in New York City

February 6, 2002

The President. Thank you very much. Gosh, thanks for the warm welcome. It's great to be back in New York City. It's the home of such courage and strength and resolve. It's shown the world and the country what it means to be a community that refuses—refuses—to back down in the face of evil and terror. I'm proud to be the President of a country where we've got such a fabulous city called New York City.

I want to thank the party chairman for his hard work. I want to thank the Lieutenant Governor for being here. She certainly brightens up the stage. [Laughter] She's smarter than all of us, too. [Laughter]

I want to thank the mayor. I appreciate the mayor taking on the awesome responsibility of being the mayor of this huge city. He could have easily have just continued to run his successful business and said, "What the heck, I'm not interested in serving." But he made a personal sacrifice for the good of the people. And the city is going through tough times, but you made the right decision to have a man who knows how to lead to be your mayor.

And I look forward to working with the mayor. George is right; we're going to work hard to make sure that New York City gets the help she needs. And it's comforting to me to be able to tell the spenders up in Congress that when we send the money here, it's going to be well managed by Mayor Bloomberg.

And I want to thank you all for coming to support my good, close friend George Pataki. He has done a—[applause]. If for no other reason you ought to send him back, it's because, like me, he married well. [Laughter] But he's got a fabulous record. He has been a breath of fresh air here in New York State. He's done in office what he said he would do. He's a plain speaker and just goes out and does it.

Audience members. Like you! [Laughter]

The President. He's one of these candidates who can actually run on his record and be proud of it. [Laughter] Some of them run away from their record. He's running on it. He's running on a great record.

But there's another reason to send him back. As you know, we're in tough times here in America. As I said in my State of the Union, we're at war; we're in recession; but we've never been stronger. And one of the reasons we're strong is that this important State has got a leader who, in the face of danger, in the face of an emergency, stood strong and steady and was reliable. In tough times, what this State needs is somebody who you can count on, somebody who won't